N° 101. SATURDAY, *January* 6, 1787.

Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit. VIRG.

MY latest predecessor has compared the opening Paper of a periodical publication, to the first entry of a stranger into a room full of company. I think I may borrow his idea, and not unaptly liken the concluding Paper of such a work to a person's going out of such a room. The same doubt whether he shall go or remain a little longer, the same reflections on what he may have said in the oppenness of his heart during his stay in the company, the same solicitude about what people will think of him when he is gone, attend the periodical author and the guest. And though the ease of modern manners has relieved us in a great measure from the ceremonial of such a situation; yet still an author, like a person of consequence, cannot with propriety take what is called a French leave of his company, but must formally announce his departure as an event in which the persons he is about to quit are considerably interested.

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The author of a periodical performance has indeed a claim to the attention and regard of his readers, more interesting than that of any other writer. Other writers submit their sentiments to their readers, with the reserve and circumspection of him who has had time to prepare for a public appearance. He who has followed *Horace*'s rule, of keeping his book nine years in his study, must have withdrawn many an idea which in the warmth of composition he had conceived, and altered many an expression which in the hurry of writing he had set down. But the periodical Essayist commits to his readers the feelings of the day, in the language which those feelings have prompted. As he has delivered himself with the freedom of intimacy, and the cordiality of friendship, he will naturally look for the indulgence which those relations may claim; and when he bids his readers adieu, will hope, as well as feel, the regrets of an acquaintance, and the tenderness of a friend.

There is somewhat of this regret, and somewhat of this tenderness, in the last farewell we take of any thing. That place must have been very unpleasant, that companion very disagreeable indeed, whom, after a long sojourn or society, we can leave without some degree of melancholy in thinking that we shall see them no more. Even that abode, or that society, with

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which we have been for months or years disgusted and distressed, long habit and acquaintance so ally to our minds, that we often wonder why we are so little rejoiced at the arrival of a period for which we have frequently wished; that our parting should rather be sad than gay, and bring us, amidst the reflections of relief, an involuntary feeling of regret.

But as the *Lounger* flatters himself that he has not been altogether an unentertaining, or at least not a disagreeable companion to his readers, he may hope for a parting on more favourable terms: that on the morning of next Saturday, they will miss his company at the accustomed time, as something which used to be expected with pleasure; and think of the papers which on that day of so many past weeks they have read, as the correspondence of one who wished their happiness, and contributed to their amusement.

If he may judge from what himself has experienced in similar circumstances, they will be apt to indulge a personification of the author of these sheets, and give him "a local habitation, and a name," according to the ideas they may have formed in the course of his performance. When such a writer has withdrawn himself from that sort of authority which he claimed for his opinions, that sort of credit which

which he aſſumed for his ſituation, we are naturally inclined to examine the reality of each; as at the death of an acquaintance, we talk with more preciſion and aſſurance than formerly, of his age, his character, and his circumſtances. To aſcertain, as well as to ſatisfy any ſuch inquiry, the Authors of the Lounger will fairly unfold themſelves; not individually, for that were to aſſume an importance to which they are not intitled; but they have an aggregate name, by which, like corporations, they can be known and impleaded: they are the ſame Society which, ſome years ago, publiſhed in this country their periodical Eſſays under the title of the *Mirror*.

In making this declaration, they incur as much danger, perhaps, as they aſſume diſtinction. He who has ſome merit of anceſtry to ſupport, draws the attention more cloſely upon his own. During the courſe of this publication, they have ſometimes been amuſed with the diſcovery of its inferiority to its predeceſſor; and have heard, with a mixture of mortification and of pride, ſome people expreſs their regret, that the Authors of the Mirror did not write in the Lounger, and reſcue it from the leſs able hands into which it had fallen. It may ſtill indeed be ſaid, that an author is often "ſibi impar;" that a ſecond work is ſeldom equal in merit to the

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firſt. But they may be allowed to indulge themſelves in the belief, that great part of the criticiſm aroſe from a natural enough propenſity to undervalue what has not yet been ſanctioned by the general opinion; from that diſpoſition, common in every thing, not to be ſatiſfied merely with what is good, but with what is called good. Be this, however, as it may, the Authors of the two Works found themſelves ſomewhere flattered by the remark; as a mother can but ſlightly reſent the criticiſm of her daughter's beauty, when it only diſcovers that ſhe herſelf was handſomer ſome twenty years ago.

When thus, like *Proſpero*, they "break their "ſtaff," and lay aſide the airy power they had aſſumed, they feel, like him, the loſs of that ſociety which the *Lounger* had raiſed around them. The viſionary characters with which he had peopled their acquaintance, they cannot help regretting as departed friends; and it is not without a ſigh that they diſmiſs *Peter* from his ſervice. But they owe that ſort of diſcloſure of themſelves which this Paper has made to ſincerity; and there is ſomething more ſolemn in their obligation to this avowal now, becauſe it is the laſt time they will have an opportunity of making it. Particular circumſtances induce them to declare, that they will not again ap-

pear before the Public as periodical Essayists, in any shape or under any name. If any future Work of that kind shall happen to come out, they will have no claim to its merits, nor responsibility for its defects.

It only remains for them to do justice to those correspondents to whose assistance they have been indebted during the course of their Work. To Correspondents they owe the following Papers: N° 7; the letter subscribed *Mary Careful*, in N° 8; N°s 11. 16. 19. 24.; the letters from *Theatricus*, in N° 25.; from *Philomusos*, in N° 42.; from *John Trueman*, in N° 44.; the letters signed *Almeria*, in N° 46. *Jessamina*, in N° 53. and *Hannah Waitfort*, in N° 55.; N°s 59, 60. 63. 70. 79. and the Poem in N° 85.

Of their readers, as well as their correspondents, they cannot take leave without a very sensible and lively regret. While they dictate this concluding paragraph, it is with a melancholy feeling they reflect, that it deprives them of an opportunity of cultivating that correspondence, and of committing to those readers the sentiments of their hearts; that it drops the curtain on their mimic state, and surrenders them to the less interesting occupations of ordinary life. Yet twice to have made a not unsuccessful excursion into this region of fancy and of literary

 dominion,

dominion, is to have atchieved ſomething which falls but to the lot of few. They can anticipate, with a venial degree of ſelf-applauſe, the talk of their age, recalling the period of their publications with an old man's fondneſs, an author's vanity, and a Scotſman's pride; happy if any one of their number, who ſhall then be pointed out as a writer in the *Mirror* or the *Lounger*, need not bluſh to avow them as works that endeavoured to liſt amuſement on the ſide of taſte, and to win the manners to decency and to goodneſs.

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FINIS.

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